

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Statement on the Gray Wolf in the Lower-48 United States

On November 3, 2020, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published a final rule delisting the gray wolf everywhere it was listed in the lower-48 United States and Mexico, except for the Mexican wolf subspecies (85 FR 69778). The rule took effect in January 2021.

On February 10, 2022, that delisting rule was vacated by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. As a result, all gray wolves in the lower-48 United States outside of the Northern Rocky Mountain region are currently protected under the Endangered Species Act. Multiple parties appealed the district court's order to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and the parties have been engaged in mediation.

On January 26, 2023, the Circuit Mediator issued an order temporarily staying the appeals for administrative purposes until February 2, 2024. During the abeyance, the Service will update the status review for the gray wolf throughout the lower-48 United States and commence a stakeholder engagement effort. More details regarding stakeholder engagement will be forthcoming.

By February 2, 2024, the Service intends to submit to the Office of the Federal Register a proposed rule concerning the listing status of gray wolves in the lower-48 United States under the Act.